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September 20, 2010

The Honorable Pam Byrnes
Chair
House Transportation Committee
State Capitol
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Representative Byrnes and Members of the House Transportation Committee,

Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance strongly supports House Bills 4958-4960, the package of bills aimed at protecting bicyclists on our roadways in two ways: 1) enacting specific penalties for those that commit moving violations that result in the injury or death of a bicyclist and 2) beefing up Michigan drivers education to include instruction related to the laws pertaining to bicycles and their operation on Michigan roads and highways.

Trails and on-road connections work together to provide the infrastructure necessary for nonmotorized transportation. Michigan's trails are increasingly used for transportation as they are connected to roads that offer safe passage to destinations, whether it be the local store or library, a friend's house, work or school. However, even though the systemic infrastructure is emerging for nonmotorized transportation, we find that the other piece of the puzzle, law enforcement and education, is not. Motorists involved with crashes with nonmotorized users are dealt with differently across the state. Many law enforcement personnel and certainly motorists themselves are not aware of their rights and responsibilities when it comes to sharing the road with a nonmotorized mode.

We feel that this package of bills will deal with this safety issue in a forthright manner. If motorists and bicyclists alike are educated on these issues, there will be fewer accidents, more confident use of the road by both modes, and more vibrant and healthy communities as nonmotorized transportation becomes a safe choice for citizens. We urge swift passage of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy Krupiarz".

Nancy Krupiarz
Executive Director

